

THE SATURDAY REVIEW

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SIXPENCE

MR. CHAMBERLAIN has got into hot water with an important section of his Parliamentary following because of certain passages in his recent Kettering speech; and it has to be admitted that in making that speech the Prime Minister was not quite his usual sagacious, discreet self. The National Government has done much for agriculture, but it has by no means as yet done all that is possible or desirable to place that great industry in the position of prosperity and security that it may fairly claim to deserve. It was, therefore, rather tactless to expound at great length the thesis that it would be the height of folly to endeavour "to grow all the food we need at home." Perhaps it would be a futile policy, but we are surely very far from attempting to carry it out when, as the Advisory Committee on Nutrition have pointed out, we import at present more than 50 per cent. of our meat, 70 per cent. of our cheese and sugar, close on 80 per cent. of our fruit, and about 90 per cent. of our cereals and fats from overseas. And why dilate on the ability of our Navy and Mercantile Marine to ensure the regularity of our overseas supplies when nothing has been done to stop the very serious and dangerous decline in our merchant shipping?

NEWFOUNDLAND, Britain's oldest overseas acquisition, seems to have at last completely turned the corner on the bankruptcy and depression which called for the appointment of a Commission Government just over four years ago. In his Budget speech, Mr. Penson, the Commissioner for Finance, has been able to announce both the largest revenue and the largest estimated expenditure in the whole long history of the island. The United Kingdom's grants-in-aid are still to be continued, and with the island's revenue expected to go on increasing, there will be no need for adding to the by no means excessive taxation of the island population. The Commission Government are applying £281,000 to a long-term reconstruction programme, including fishery, agriculture, housing, road and bridge building and health and educational facilities, and are also setting aside another quarter of a million for a short-term programme of relief work, the encouragement of fisheries and other temporary expedients for easing unemployment. In outlining the Commission's proposals Mr. Penson found occasion for expressing the utmost confidence in the island's future, and his optimism seems to be fully justified by the remarkable recovery so far achieved under the Commission régime. Four years are not a very long period for accomplishing all that this Commission Government has done for the island and its people.

PALESTINE CONTINUES to be in the news, and the latest cables afford distressing evidence that racial passions in the Holy Land, so far from dying down under the pacifying influence of the latest Commission of inquiry, have been and are being roused to fresh acts of murder and terrorism. Jews and Arabs in various parts of the country have been busy attacking one another with a frenzy that the wholly inadequate military and police force is unable to check. The situation is such that even Printing-house Square feels constrained to write about it in a strain of deep pessimism. The famous Tegar Line of barbed wire merely provokes from it the comment that "there is a good deal to be said for the view that this passive method of defence detracts from the prestige of the British Administration in Palestine"; and it concludes with the depressing reflection that "it is only too certain many more lives will be lost in assassinations and affrays before order is restored in the Holy Land." More troops are being sent out to Palestine in the coming autumn, and it is highly probable that still more will be required in the way of successive relays of reinforcements in the not too distant future—if Partition and the hopelessly impracticable Geneva Mandate still remain the Government-accepted plan for bringing peace to Palestine.

THERE IS ONE THING that strikes the average reader in the acceptance by the Non-Intervention Committee of the British plan for the withdrawal of foreign combatants from Spain: four Great Powers, Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy handed to the Secretary cheques for £12,500 each. The amount is inconsiderable but it does suggest that the Powers in question are in earnest and have come to the conclusion that it is in everybody's interest that the Spaniards should be left to decide for themselves who shall rule them and how they shall be governed. The only fly in the ointment is Russia, which is so reluctant to lay down so useful a weapon for involving Europe in a general war, but even the Soviet with the Far East problem menacing its frontier may be inclined to mark time. Meantime, General Franco's troops are slowly pressing on towards Valencia and it seems highly possible that Sajunto will add one more siege to its long history.

THE COLONIAL OFFICE has come under the fire of criticism from various correspondents in the Press and the late Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Sir John Maffey, has entered the lists to defend that office from the charge of conducting its business on the same unprogressive

lines of "half a century ago." In his letter to the *Times* he contends that "within the last 10 years or so the organisation of the Colonial Office has been revolutionised to enable it to deal more effectively with the problems presented it by modern conditions" and proceeds to show that in its higher staff there are men with extensive colonial experience and that in the lower ranks "there is frequent interchange of staff between the Service abroad and the Empire at home." As for the proposed setting up of a Colonial Council to advise the Secretary of State, he holds that "such an organisation would either be completely ineffective or would cause intolerable delay in dealing with the complex and urgent problems which arise from day to day in the work of the Colonial Office." With his own knowledge of India and how the India Office works, Sir John might well have cited the old (now extinct) India Council as an example of ornate ineffectiveness. Where Secretaries of State have minds of their own they are apt to have little use for Councils or their advice; where there is already indecision at the top a multiplicity of counsel can hardly make for greater perspicacity and wisdom. Whether the Colonial Office will show itself capable or not of tackling effectively the problems with which it is confronted to-day and may be confronted to-morrow will depend solely and wholly on the fitness for his responsible post of Mr. Malcolm MacDonald.

THE TROUBLES CAUSED by the progress of science and the centralisation it involves were illustrated by the breakdown of the electric trains on the Southern Railway as a result of the thunderstorm in which lightning paralysed the grid system. Coaches and steam trains were almost immune from the elements and in the old days the weather could not interfere with lighting or cooking arrangements. In our own time, when a machine breaks down, it collapses utterly and the people who have depended on its service find it very hard to replace it by those means of fortune which were once the ordinary everyday system. The danger of an air-raid is infinitely greater to a highly civilised community, because it has a number of vital points which once wrecked will spread paralysis far and wide.

CANADA HAS ADVANCED as rapidly as any country in the world in the matter of her aviation, but in the creation of her great Trans-Canada service she is, to use the words of the Vice-President of the Air Lines, Mr. Philip G. Johnson, "making haste slowly" for the purpose of securing the maximum of efficiency. Sections of the route will be in regular operation this summer, but the Atlantic and Pacific seaboard will probably be a development of later date. The airway from Vancouver to Winnipeg across the Rockies is at the present moment nearing completion. On this route, as well as on the other sections between the Prairies and the Eastern provinces, wireless equipment is being installed of the most modern type available. The service, in short, is intended to be one of the best of its kind in the world.

AS BEFITS A COUNTRY where agriculture is still, despite the development of many alternative sources of wealth, the dominant industry, the Canadian education authorities are devoting very considerable attention to the theory of farming in the extension courses. For no other occupation, indeed, with the possible exception of Home-making, do the Provincial and Federal Governments conduct so many services outside the normal schools as for Agriculture. Short courses by the Provincial Mines Departments for prospectors have, for example, been attended by nearly 5,000 men in the year, but the courses on farming, varying in length from a few days to a few weeks, are attended by several times this number. The students are mostly farmers, their wives and their children. The total number of schools that would be called agricultural high schools, in the sense that the term "technical high school" is used, is less than a dozen, but some of the provinces provide a good deal of agricultural instruction in the regular courses for school leaving, normal entrance, or matriculation. About one-third of the academic secondary schools in Ontario (collegiate institutes, high and continuation schools) have agricultural classes. The "ruralisation" of teaching in Quebec schools also has received emphasis in recent years.

JOHN WHITE ABBOTT is well worth a visit to Walker's Galleries. He was a fine and conscientious water-colour draughtsman of the early 19th century, and his precise and miniature landscapes have a peculiarly restful and refreshing quality in this age. No. 46 is a gem.

AT GOLDSMITH'S HALL a very fine exhibition of modern silver is being held in the interest of the British silver industry, and is open free to the public. Only the best examples of modern design and craftsmanship are on show, and most of the exhibits have never been seen before by the public. The plate for the Chapel of Chivalry in the new Guildford Cathedral is interesting, and there are lovely examples of enamelling, chasing and engraving.

The exhibition, which ends on July 16th, is open every day till 3.30 (Sundays excepted) and is well worth a visit.

AT 6, CHESTERFIELD-Gardens, the Spanish Art Galleries are showing a remarkable collection of works of art, including paintings by El Greco, Goya and Van Dyk. Furniture, unique of its kind, tapestries, and china all contribute to make a feast for the collector or the mere admirer of beautiful things.

EDWARD WOLFE has zest, and lets himself go at the Mayor Gallery. His water-colours and pastels are worth a visit; especially the former, in which clever use is made of a pen-line. The tobacco field No. 5 is charming, and there is a good drawing of a child's head (unnumbered) in the corner.

The nudes are inclined to be heavily purple and perfunctorily professional. In a show of this kind it is, so to say, the amateur we enjoy.

Leading Articles

SCIENCE AND TRUTH

IN an address given at a meeting of that admirable organisation, the Institute for the Scientific Treatment of Delinquency, Mr. Norman Birkett, K.C., suggested that the words "science" and "scientific" conjure up fear and even dislike in many people's minds and his remark provided a starting point for an exceedingly interesting controversy in the columns of the *Times*. It was perhaps surprising that no correspondents queried the truth of Mr. Birkett's statement. To many it does appear that science in its narrow sense is treated with all the awe and respect it deserves and that it still does command the unreasoning admiration of the masses. If science and scientists have lost something of the stranglehold which they exercised on mankind at the end of the last century, it is their own fault. Excessive claims have been put forward for the validity of scientific knowledge. The learned knife, to use Dostoevsky's phrase, divided the knowledge obtained by scientific methods from the knowledge that belongs to philosophy, art and religion, and the scientist claimed that he alone held the key to the problem of existence. As one of the *Times*' letters pointed out, the antagonism to the word "science" is partly due to the fact that one group of sciences has usurped the title of the whole body of scientific thought; science which should include all knowledge has come to mean natural science and a degree in science means a degree in what used to be known as "stinks."

The truth is a far greater thing than natural science. As Mr. G. M. Young pointed out, the men of science acknowledge with their lips that science is progressive, a movement from greater to lesser error, yet few of them are ready to proclaim to the world the necessary conclusion that anything they believe to-day may turn out to be slightly or greatly wrong to-morrow. Mr. Young's challenge called Professor Julian Huxley into the field who averred that "there exists an enormous body of scientific fact and theory which can never turn out to be wrong in any degree." Professor MacBride added that science does make permanent and irreversible progress. Men are very wise in our days. They are as certain that they are right as were their ancestors long ago when they were sure that the earth was the centre of the universe. Yet all this permanent and irreversible progress has to start somewhere. It is based entirely on human observations, on the human mind, for all devices for observing the outer world are finally dependent on the human senses. Is there any real certainty that a building constructed on such a foundation can stand for ever in any of its parts? The so-called law of cause and effect is the basis of the scientific

method, yet the universality of this law has of late been questioned by men of science. It is true that indeterminism has been relegated to the universe of the very small; it may be that it will disappear as knowledge progresses, but surely it is a bold man who will say that any part of scientific knowledge is irreversible when the foundations of the whole edifice can be shaken by its builders.

One of the troubles of our age is our failure to co-ordinate all knowledge into some rational theory of life and the universe. Natural science may or may not be progressing towards truth, but it is certainly incapable of dealing with the whole of nature. It seems possible that psychology may eventually link up the sciences with the inner truths of art and religion, but to all appearances this consummation can never be achieved by the scientific method alone. It is always pleasing when scientists in argument resort to the weapons of psycho-analysis, as when Professor Huxley suspects "wish-fulfilment" in the attitude of those who throw doubt on the certainty of scientific knowledge: the weapons are so obviously double-edged. Modern life is chaotic, because we cannot see the wood for the trees. There are so many trunks, and so many branches, and so many leaves, that we have no time to look for a way through the forest and wander helplessly with no final goal. And so it will be until philosophy resumes its function of co-ordinating all knowledge and setting in order the confusion of our minds. It is a strange comment on progress that the greater part of the Western world thinks it is waste of time to inquire into the meaning and purpose of life. In a great part of Europe people are assured that they only exist as a fraction of a mystical entity called the State and that the welfare of that entity outweighs the welfare of its members. The kingdom of the ants and bees is upon us and the happiness of the State which has no feelings implies the slavery and unhappiness of its members.

ON BALCONIES

WHY I did it, I really don't know, but instead of going straight over to the Round Pond where I generally seize a chair, if the ground is damp, or sit on the grass when it isn't, and watch the budding Drakes, I went the whole length of the Broad Walk and, more stupid still, forsook the park for the hard and dusty pavement. Yet, my sub-conscious mind must have been at the bottom of the whole manoeuvre, for, once outside the gates, I turned to the left without any hesitation, and knew what it was I was going to do. I had promised myself many times that I would do just this thing, but somehow I had never found my mood and the time both auspicious. But now, I said to myself, none shall stop me from standing again outside the house where I was born.

As I made my way along with determination and a lengthened stride, it seemed to me a pity that I should have been born in a neighbourhood where one porticoed house is exactly like another, except for a certain variety about the paint on the

front doors. Not that I should have liked to have had my first glimpse of the daylight from behind the curtains of a bedroom in some massive country seat. Those huge places, set in their timbered parks, always appear so impersonal to me, and one can't lay one's hands against their cheeks and be permeated with friendliness. They are aloof and mighty, condescending and haughty. But there are many places in the country which are small and individualistic enough to be recalled in every detail, and these are not too proud to recognise a young tenant grown older. I have never had a weakness for roses round the door, but I do like dormer windows, jasmine and wistaria, and an acre of ground that strange feet leave untrodden. So, as I paced the unfriendly pavement, I could not help thinking how much more satisfactory such a pilgrimage as I was engaged upon could have been.

A second disquieting thought further harried my advance to the objective. We had not even owned the whole house in Bayswater, but had merely been tenants of the middle portion, the slice that had the balcony and, now that I have reached maturer years, I find myself unable to understand what uses balconies in London are meant to serve. Certainly if one happens to live on the route, they come in handy for coronations, funerals and state processions and, if they don't give way, the fortunate possessor may recover a year's rent at the price of the hire of a few cheap chairs, but such balconies are few and far between, and are not members of the Balconies Union. This union exists in Bayswater, and elsewhere, to make sure that every one of its members looks exactly the same, and that they all carry the right amount of soot and rainwater. Perfect discipline has marked its efforts on the north side of the park.

Balconies now appear to me as large excrescences, but in the late Edwardian days one, at any rate, of these grimy elevated platforms presented quite a different aspect. As a rule, this peninsula of stonework used to represent Syracuse to me, and the reason for this astounding assumption lay in the fact that I had just made, through the kind offices of my history master, the acquaintance of a gentleman named Archimedes for whom I had conceived an instant liking.

As you probably remember, the main thing about Syracuse was that it was always in a state of siege, and a state of siege was at that time a condition for which I had a leaning. What easier than to cajole the cook for a slice of bread and dripping, fill one of the hot water bottles with cold water, shut the drawing-room doors, and review one's plight, a proper understanding of which will be readily grasped when it is realised that everyone passing in the street below was a Roman, and massacre was the password.

But there was in Syracuse at the time when Marcellus invested it, as you will probably also remember, a whale of a man, whose name was Archimedes, an engineer of more than usual ingenuity; and this Archimedes invented all sorts of delightful machines for the embarrassment of the Romans. It would probably astonish Archimedes somewhat to discover that I judged myself

to be the reincarnation of his estimable self, and I also invented many machines for the destruction of errand boys, which was the usual guise of Marcellus and his troops, and sometimes for grown-up people, who had the temerity to walk within range of my hidden armaments.

My favourite machine had the merit of extreme simplicity; it consisted of one thick piece of wood, which served as a fulcrum, and one long piece of thin wood that was laid across it. On the end of the thin piece of wood the missile, preferably a lump of coal, was placed. One then jumped heartily on the other end of the thin piece of wood, the coal leapt into the air and, clearing the balustrade, began its flight to the pavement. The advantages of this performance were twofold, and must be clear of the veriest tyros in a state of siege. First of all, there was the constant uncertainty as to whether the enemy had been hit, and if he had been missed, there was a nice mess on the pavement to ponder over and admire.

These platforms so cunningly suspended over the enemy's lines, however, have one great disadvantage; it is impossible to see underneath them, and my activities became seriously curtailed when a lump of muddy earth from the window box hit the tenant of the ground floor flat as he emerged from the house. After that the siege of Syracuse was raised for a time in favour of another very promising notion.

I believe it was Aristotle (or was it Empedocles) who first announced that there were four elements, but I had not reached the works of those philosophers then and, for me, there were only three. Earth, in its natural London condition or sometimes in the form of coal, water and fire. Having been deprived of the first named I came to consider the other two with greater care. With water I already had a nodding acquaintance. A water pistol, produced occasionally, had definite uses, but there was one great drawback; unless one fought close to a reservoir, like the Round Pond, the weapon speedily lost all its attraction. Added to which, unless the enemy was properly accoutred in a clean Eton collar and a well-brushed Eton suit, the effect was often very disappointing—indeed, if the jet hit him in the face, his condition after wiping it with his pocket handkerchief was sometimes more respectable after the fray than before it. But fire—that was another matter.

Fire is one of the most difficult things with which to play. Even meddling with a tiny piece of it, such as there is on the end of a match, led, in my experience, invariably to an instant outcry and retreat became inevitable. Indeed, it seemed to me that the ability to have a nice conflagration wherever and whenever one wanted was an irrefutable argument in favour of camping out for the rest of one's life, instead of being cluttered up with furniture and girt with walls. As things were, unless one made one in the hearth, it was impossible to enlist any support, however shadowy, for the idea; and making a small fire next door to a place where a big one already existed, appeared futile to me.

Having a nice blaze on the balcony was quite another pair of shoes, or so it seemed to me;

because none of the ridiculous ideas about the consequence of having one at all had any bearing. There was no carpet to singe and one couldn't burn down the house from the outside.

For children, then, balconies in London had their uses and, as I stood at length beneath that which had been mine, and upon which I had had such tremendous adventures, I was almost tempted to unsay all the rude things which I have said about them. I even went so far as to wish that I stood upon it once again to watch the careless enemy at the gates, and I wondered what kind of people lived where once I had been Archimedes, regretting that I had not, as he, been able to rig up a crane that could lift men bodily from the ground and dash them to pieces against the walls of the city. Those were the days!

To-day all the children I meet have so many toys, and electricity is their bosom friend who woos them with trains. A biscuit box and a pint of turpentine would be too lowly companions for them. At least, so I imagined, until I turned away when a piece of coal hit me sharply in the back. I glanced up, but the latest Archimedes quite properly gave no sign of his presence. So I walked away, more confidently probably than he expected, for I know now, what I didn't when I hurled coal and other delightful things about, that Archimedes was killed, and it was Marcellus who came in triumph to Rome.

PETER TRAILL.

BRIEF COMMUNION

THEY were alone in the room; at least it seemed to him that they were alone. There were one or two other people, but somehow they did not interrupt. They remained very quiet in their own corners, even more quiet than she was herself. There was the Colonel looking rather pleased with himself, sticking his stomach out and all dressed up in the uniform of a hundred years ago; and then on the other side of the room stood the old peer with his white beard, very dignified in the robes which he was wearing for the coronation; and the quaint Italian marquis with his funny frizzly hair, though he appeared about to say something at any moment, held his peace and remained silent.

But she was different. He felt her looking at him from the moment he entered the room, and when at last, rather nervously, he turned to face her, his heart sank, but it was with the thrill of seeing her; and he knew in those first few seconds' silence that it was an inevitable encounter, at once tragic and wonderful. There could be no turning back, no refusal of this strange girl's challenge, of the desperate appeal in her sad, beseeching eyes.

They said no word to each other, but more plainly than any words could tell, her whole bearing begged his sympathy. In her eyes was just the slightest smile, lighting up the weariness and resignation of which they clearly spoke. It was on her lips to say something, but he raised his

hand to silence her. He knew as well as she that there was nothing to be said, nothing that was not already perfectly understood between them. She had been too frail to survive life at its usual level, and had been driven to accept instead, not the comfort and consolation on which such as she so often thrived, living through other people when their own fund of vitality proved too low, but a loneliness so complete that she must have felt many times that it was indeed a life sentence. She had no need to tell him this; nor to say how long she had awaited just such an occasion, when she might meet a friend who, not requiring her to plead her cause, would drown her sorrow in a moment's blissful atonement.

He stood before her smiling and motionless. She was beautiful in a way he had not found a woman beautiful before, as is a ruin overgrown with ivy, and its stones from long exposure, smooth and still. Her russet hair, parted roughly in the middle, hung down straggling over her left shoulder, from which her dark green cloak had fallen away. She seemed to him so mellow, sad and quiet a figure as to be the very spirit of autumn, a creature whose whole essence lay in her readiness to depart. It was even a little out of place, he felt, looking into her large pale eyes, that he should detain her thus. But the faded green of those large eyes bewitched him, and as he watched her he felt her need of him grow stronger, and he knew too, beyond any doubt, that this brief communion would very soon be ended. It was not for him to deny so slight, but so invaluable a service to such a one as she.

He recalled suddenly and very clearly a remark of George Eliot's which he had read not many days before. "It is hard," she had said, "to believe long together that anything is worth while unless there is some eye to kindle in common with our own, some brief word uttered now and then to imply that what is infinitely precious to us is precious alike to another mind." But still he found it hard to say what bond it was that joined him to this quiet, distracted girl. It seemed enough that for the moment he could understand her feeling, and that she should remain there before him, mute and sad but strongly sympathetic.

Her presence had so stirred him that he felt unable to face the other people in the room. The burden of the secret she had shared with him seemed to paralyse his movements. These others who were coming into luncheon were dream-creatures, fantastic and rather horrifying. That he must sit down again and join them was impossible. He felt no longer competent to reassume again the task of living.

Somehow this green-eyed girl had contrived to change places with him. For she alone in all the room was real to him; her spirit was so vital, it deprived the others of life; her soft white shoulders and those small, pursed lips seemed more credible to him than even his own identity. She it was who was alive; while he must now stay penned for ever within the narrow boundary of that heavy gold frame, doomed to gaze out from that dark canvas, alone, resigned and sorrowful.

C. H. V.

Books of The Day

GERMAN POINT OF VIEW

IF EVER there is to be a satisfactory Anglo-

German understanding and agreement, the way to it will have to be prepared by the Governments and people of each country thoroughly appreciating and making allowance for the other country's points of view on matters and policies that it holds to be of importance. As a notable step towards this very necessary preliminary, one may welcome a book just published by Messrs. Thornton Butterworth, under the title "Germany Speaks" (10s. 6d.). Here we have an admirably instructive collection of essays by twenty-one men who are or have been in responsible positions in Hitlerite Germany and are able to speak with authority on the various subjects they treat. The highly commendable object of these essays is to avoid controversy so far as possible and to set out for the edification of English readers both the main achievements of Nazi Germany and the leading principles of the Hitlerite creed with a view to promoting a better understanding between the two countries.

The last and longest essay (by Freiherr von Rheinbaben) is an earnest plea for Anglo-German friendship. In it the writer surveys both the past and the present international scene, and if his candid interpretation of events may be contested at several points, at least it has its value as presenting what appears to be the accepted Nazi standpoint. One obstacle to Anglo-German friendship that he suggests will have to be removed is what he regards as the unfortunate tendency of the nationals of each country to criticise the other's internal politics. Perhaps in this matter the Nazis are considerably more sensitive than we are. However, this particular essay deserves to be read with considerable sympathy because of its author's obvious sincerity. As for the other essays they cover practically the whole field of Nazi activity in what one writer calls the "psychic and cultural renovation" of the German people. Of especial interest are the accounts given of the treatment of the unemployed problem, of road building, of population and race policies and of changes in educational theories. The German mind, unlike the English, is peculiarly prone to dogmatise and accordingly in all these records of Nazi achievement the philosophic basis of every measure of progress is invariably and from an English angle excessively stressed. But that merely helps to illustrate divergences of mental outlook between the Germans and ourselves.

That German philosophy is sometimes guilty of woefully misunderstanding English institutions is clear from the curious comment the Reich Minister of Justice permits himself to make regarding the addition to the German legal code of a new clause two and a half years ago. This clause, he writes, abolishes the maxim "according to which no offence can be punished unless it is specifically

mentioned in the existing code and enables the judge to inflict punishment for acts which—although not thus specifically mentioned—are yet of such a nature as to demand punishment in pursuance of the general tenor of the law and in accordance with healthy national sentiments." He then goes on to say:—

The legislator realised the impossibility of making the provisions of "written" law so comprehensive as to cover all conditions actually met with, and thus adopted a principle with which the British people have been familiar from time immemorial as only a small part of English law is "written."

It will assuredly be news to most Englishmen that our law provides for the conviction of persons for a non-indictable offence.

A GREAT WELSHMAN

It is almost half a century since David Davies, grandfather of the present Lord Davies, died; and when one considers what he accomplished for Wales and how great was his fame throughout the Principality, it is surprising perhaps that the story of his life has not been written before. However, this singular omission on the part of the writers of biography is no longer to be deplored since it has provoked Mr. Ivor Thomas to the task of carefully gathering a vast amount of material for a really first-rate portrait study of a truly remarkable man ("Top Sawyer, A Biography of David Davies of Llandinam," Longmans, illustrated, 10s. 6d.). The title is taken from the Victorian method of sawing wood, with one man on top of a wooden platform and the other below. Davies and his father, besides farming, used to do a great deal of wood sawing and on his father's death Davies declared that henceforth he would be "top Sawyer." And that declaration was a fitting comment on his subsequent career in which he rose from the occupation of sawing wood and farming to the position of contractor, first, for the building of a small bridge and then for constructing 144 miles of railways and thereafter proceeded to interest himself in coal mining and the creation of the Barry Dock.

The "Top Sawyer" had a genius for rising to the top of anything he undertook. Part of his success in life he may have owed to luck; but far the greater part of it was due to his ability to see a little further than his fellows, to his own capacity for hard work and to sterling qualities of character that commanded the respect, confidence and affection of those who worked under him. He was fond of reminding his workmen that he was one of them and that if they wished to prosper as he had done, they had only to follow his example: work hard, save money and abstain from tobacco and drink. And as an illustration of the willing service his men would give him there is the story of his first sinkings in the Upper Rhondda coalfields. He had exhausted all his capital and his men offered to work for another week for nothing. In that week they struck the coal that had hitherto eluded them. Davies as a self-made man was not unnaturally proud of what he had accomplished and his sturdy egotism was apt to irritate some of those with whom he came into contact in his later life (notably Disraeli). But if he was an egotist,

he was also ever ready to open his purse in the cause of charity. A man of deep religious conviction, he acted upon the Scriptural injunction to set aside at least a tithe of his income for religious and philanthropic purposes. As a politician Davies sat for Cardigan in the Liberal interest, but when Gladstone introduced his Home Rule Bill Davies refused to follow him and in consequence lost his seat. Here again he displayed the independence of his spirit and his loyalty to principles he believed to be right. Modern industrial Wales has reason to be grateful to him for the far-sightedness of his vision and for the courage and zeal he exhibited in carrying out the essential pioneering work in the Victorian era.

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY HUMANIST

John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, has come down in history with the evil reputation attached to him of "the butcher of England." As Lord High Constable under Edward IV he was certainly guilty of executing and impaling after death a number of not very important prisoners captured in Warwick's raid on Southampton and his condemnation of the Earl of Oxford was to be particularly unfortunate for him since he was later to become the prisoner of the son of the noble he had sentenced to death and could hardly expect to be mercifully treated by his captor. On the day appointed for his execution he was unable to reach the scaffold because of the vast crowds assembled to watch the sight and so his execution was postponed till the following day. In spite of this extraordinary experience, Tiptoft met his death very calmly, begging the headman to cut off his head with three strokes instead of one "in honour of the blessed Trinity." If Tiptoft was ruthless as High Constable, he was only a creature of his own times when there was little heed for the sanctity of life in dealing with the adherents of a rival party. Possibly the nickname he incurred was due to Lancastrian hatred of a man who never wavered in his allegiance to the White Rose. His fidelity to the Yorkists was certainly remarkable in an age when people showed an inclination to change sides in accordance with the changing fortunes of White or Red Rose. And in one other respect Tiptoft had strong claims to fame: he stood out among his contemporaries as a humanist and scholar and patron of learning. Several of his translations from Latin have survived down to this day. Miss R. J. Mitchell, in writing Tiptoft's biography ("John Tiptoft, 1427-1470," Longmans, illustrated, 16s.), has unearthed, by her assiduous research, much interesting material about his life and career and her book, besides being a scholarly contribution to fifteenth-century history, should serve to rehabilitate the character of Tiptoft in the eyes of Posterity.

NEW NOVELS

Though it begins and ends in England Mrs. Kathleen Wallace's new book "Ancestral Tablet" (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.) has China for the greater part of its background—the China of the Boxer Rebellion and of the old Empress that was to

witness the beginnings of a revolutionary change in its methods of government and in many of its old social customs. All this background is vividly filled in by an author intimately familiar with it; and if the story is a lengthy one, the main threads of it are manipulated with a skill and ease that enables the reader to appreciate to the full its undoubted charm. Mrs. Wallace tells her story with a straightforward simplicity and sincerity that somehow make both her tale and characters all the more convincing.

A curious, but fascinating story is "The Traveller's Return," by E. F. Bozman (Dent). The author has chosen a difficult subject: the return of the ghost of a dead soldier to the old home land to carry out a mission entrusted to the soldier when still alive. The dead man's son is very like him and sometimes the characters in the story (and the reader) seem to confuse the two. However, the dreamlike quality of the tale is part of its attraction and Mr. Bozman also succeeds in giving us some excellent living portraits.

Mr. W. B. Maxwell with his "Everslade" (Hutchinson, 8s. 6d.) has now completed a trilogy under the title of "Men and Women." The new book is mainly concerned with two families—that of the Lord of the Manor in the village of Everslade and the other whose head is a not very successful local solicitor. With an experienced and able writer like Mr. Maxwell, one may always be sure that the reader will have no cause for complaint either over the characters or the general form of the story, and this new book abundantly shows that Mr. Maxwell has lost none of his old cunning and artistry.

A light and amusing, very readable tale is "Ask Me No Questions," by Edward Hope (Chapman & Hall), in which we have the surprising adventures of a young American in the South of France as the result of efforts to escape the censure of his somewhat cold and proud fiancée.

In "The Survivors," by René Behaine (Allen & Unwin, translated by Edward Crankshaw and with a preface by Ford Madox Ford), we have the story, quietly but exquisitely told, of the gradual decay of an old aristocratic family in France. This is the first of M. Behaine's books to be translated into English and he has been singularly fortunate in his translator.

Mr. Norman Denny has written a lively and entertaining comedy out of the association of a South American financier with a pleasant, but bankrupt young Englishman ("The Serpent and The Dove," Lane). Mr. Denny manages his situations admirably and if his "dove" is perhaps a little too trusting, his "serpent" is endowed with an amazing amount of guile. And he is rather a likeable serpent for all his wiles.

Miss Margery Allingham is among the best of our detective fiction writers and there can be no doubt as to the warm welcome that will be accorded to her latest venture, "The Fashion in Shrouds" (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.). The title is intriguing and the contents just what one would expect from Miss Allingham: a well-knit, exciting story, with false clues astutely laid and an interesting set of very live characters.

Round the Empire

AUSTRALIAN HEALTH AND PENSION BILL

THE Lyons Cabinet's National Health and Pensions Bill has received a good deal of criticism and opposition in various circles. Among others, the Australian doctors have been up in arms over the small sum (2½d. per week) offered for treating an insured person under the Bill. Despite the opposition of medical practitioners, the Lyons' Government appeared to be confident of finding sufficient doctors throughout Australia who will be prepared to accept engagement as official medical officers under the plan.

In announcing in the House of Representatives the intention to include in the scope of insurance farmers, shopkeepers, and self-employed persons, and to make specific provision to enable women to contribute on an optional basis for the same old-age pension as men, Mr. Lyons said:—"The number of people who want to come into the scheme, or who, being in, want to pay more and get larger benefits, is witness to its outstanding merits. Farmers, shopkeepers, and other self-employed persons cannot be brought into this compulsory scheme, because large numbers of them would object to being compelled to pay for benefits which they did not want or need. Self-employed persons can only be brought in on a voluntary basis, and the Treasurer has intimated that it was the intention of the Government to examine the possibilities of such a scheme. Since then sufficient progress has been made to justify me in definitely announcing that, although a large amount of work has yet to be done, the Government will later bring in a Bill in connection with this particular problem.

"Women complain that the bill provides for an old-age pension of only 15/- a week for them, as against 20/- for men. But the woman's 15/- pension at 60 costs more money than the man's 20/- at 65, and she pays five years' less contributions. However, the real issue is, 'can women afford to pay a higher contribution?' The total woman's contribution is 2/- a week, rising ultimately to 2/6 a week. We must face the fact that the average wage of a woman is not as high as that of a man.

"The Government has therefore decided to give an option to all women insured under the scheme to qualify for a full insurance pension of 20/- a week on the payment of an extra 6d. a week on a voluntary basis. The option will have to be exercised within a limited period after entry into insurance, but there will be no age limits. Any woman, whatever her age when she enters insurance, will get the option, and if she elects to pay the extra contribution she may continue the payment for a higher rate of pension if she becomes a special voluntary contributor."

The Federal Ministry also have decided to extend medical benefits to wives and children of insured persons. This decision, which was the

result of representations from a group of Ministerial supporters, will provide aid for 700,000 families.

Commenting on these later developments in what it calls "The National Incubus Bill," the *Sydney Bulletin* expresses alarm at the expanding costs of the scheme. The Bill, it says "was based on strict actuarial figures. If these limits are altered, even to a slight degree, the whole financial basis of the vast scheme will be disorganised. The original figure ran to £285,000,000. If half the promises alleged to have been made are honored this will be exceeded by at least another £100,000,000. A great deal of explaining will be required when the matter of extra Federal taxation required for their fulfilment comes out in committee. No more inappropriate time could have been chosen for introducing the measure. The overseas situation is such as to render large expenditure on defence imperative and urgent, with consequent increase in taxation. Has Mr. Lyons attempted to visualise what would happen to the scheme if Australia had to fight for its life at home and abroad in another international war-madness? Does he fully realise that the whole vast accumulated pensions fund will, in 40 years from now, still be unable to meet the pensions bill of 1978 by more than £15,000,000?"

UNION'S NATIVE POLICY

"The growing poverty of the many and the growing riches of the few represent the danger signals for this country," said Mr. D. B. Molteno, Union M.P. representing Cape natives, in an address on "Economic Planning and the Economic Colour Bar," to the Literary Circle in the Zionist Hall, Cape Town, recently. The native policy in the Union, said Mr. Molteno, had led to an economic policy which, despite possible bursts of prosperity, must bring about a progressive deterioration in the economic conditions of the country. Of the Union's 6,500,000 natives it was calculated that about 3,500,000 were in the native reserves, something under 2,250,000 laboured on European-owned farms, and over 750,000 were permanently urbanised. In the Transkei, the richest of the native territories, the average yearly income from agriculture in excess of basic food requirements for a family of five was £2 13s. 6d., while in the Bechuanaland Cape territories it was only £1 17s. 7d. This was increased to £4 17s. 6d. a year and £2 16s. a year respectively by work on mines and in towns. Of this, £1 10s. a year had to go in taxes. The average native farm labourer's wage would be about 10s. a month plus rations. The urban native worker was comparatively worse off. Whilst at its highest his average wage might be £4 10s. a month in cash terms, his basic minimum requirements cost him at the least £6.

"It will be seen that almost the entire native population lives below the 'maize' line," said Mr. Molteno. The policy of the Union was to perpetuate that state of affairs. Its civilised labour policy, the European land monopoly and the countless restrictions upon native economic movement all tended to make the supply of unskilled native labour larger and cheaper. Certainly this native policy was anything but a policy of segregation. It was not even partial segregation. The

1936 Native Land Act with its provision of 7,000,000 morgen of land for natives did not alter the position at all. There was still no possibility of the natives becoming an independent land-owning peasant community. "The latest measure in this policy is causing the gravest concern and apprehension to the native peoples," stated Mr. Molteno. "It is the Native Laws Amendment Act, the main provisions of which are now coming into operation. They are aimed at restricting the ingress of natives into the urban areas and removing all surplus natives. I see hundreds of natives every week from the reserves and in every single case they state that they would prefer to remain in their reserves but are forced into the towns to eke out their earnings. This new Act prevents this. They are left with the alternatives of returning to their reserves to starve or going to gaol for non-payment of taxes—and ultimately both—or going to work on European-owned farms. It is, therefore, just another measure to stimulate artificially the supply of cheap unskilled labour."

What, asked Mr. Molteno, were the effects of these policies upon the economic structure of the country? His reply was that the result was to place a premium upon the employment of unskilled labour, and the remedy of trying to restrict still further the jobs which natives might carry out merely aggravated the position. The number of skilled highly-paid European workers would tend to decrease. Consumption tended to decrease. Efforts were made to counteract this by export subsidies, but the ultimate result was a restriction in production to keep prices up. More people were thrown off the land to join the ranks of the unskilled poor whites, and so the vicious circle went on and on. There would develop a steadily decreasing class of European land monopolists and a bigger and bigger army of unskilled labour tending downwards to the native level.

ANTI-SEMITISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr, Union Minister of Mines, found occasion in a recent speech to deplore the prevalence of Anti-Semitism in South Africa. It was, he said, "a new thing; a poisonous infection blown by evil winds from across the seas. It is alien to our traditions, and we must rise up in revolt against it. It is something which, if allowed to go unchecked, will sully the fair name of our nation." South Africa, he said, prided itself on its freedom, tolerance, and hospitality. Those who preached anti-Semitism were attacking the outstanding characteristics of the nation. The causes of anti-Semitism, he continued, were the distinctiveness and successes of the Jew. These features tended to create suspicions and prejudices in the minds of unthinking people. Because the Jew in South Africa was said to be distinctive, he was also considered to be unassimilable.

"It is possible to be different in national life but still be assimilable," said Mr. Hofmeyr. "History has shown that the Jew is assimilable. My ideal of a South African nation is not uniformity but unity." The Jewish community, Mr. Hofmeyr went on, had been represented among the early pioneers and had played an important rôle in all walks of life in building up the

nation. "If the Jew has succeeded," said Mr. Hofmeyr, "it is because of his qualities. It is a very common fallacy in South Africa to think that if this one section of the community prospers it must be at the expense of another. If one section prospers so do the others. If Jews had never come to South Africa the country would have been poorer. If they left to-morrow the shock to the financial and economic stability of the country would be irreparable. The Jew has made no mean contribution to the structure of our national well-being," concluded Mr. Hofmeyr.

CAPE'S FIRST WHITE COLONY

An interesting article in the *Cape Times* shows that the first Europeans to live under the shadow of Table Mountain were not van Riebeeck and his men but a party of English convicts who were marooned there instead of being sent to the gallows. This first European settlement took place in 1615, nearly 37 years before van Riebeeck arrived, and provides one of the most dramatic stories in South African history, although it has been ignored by the history books.

In January, 1615, the directors of the English East India Company persuaded King James to reprieve a number of felons who had been sentenced to death so that these men might be distributed at various places on the route to India to secure provisions for passing ships and generally spy out the land. King James agreed to the proposal, and 19 "Newgate jail-birds" were assigned to the Company's next expedition to India, which consisted of the four vessels, *Lyon*, *Dragon*, *Peppercorne* and *Expedition*. The fleet left Gravesend on January 24, 1615, and after a voyage of 132 days, during which the convicts gave a good deal of trouble, arrived in Table Bay on June 5.

On June 16 ten of the convicts were put ashore with provisions and arms and ammunition. They elected as their leader a man named Cross, who had formerly been a Yeoman of the Royal Guard but had been sentenced to death for killing another Guardsman in a duel. On June 20 the fleet continued on its way to India, but in the meantime another vessel, the *Hope*, had arrived in Table Bay from India on her way back to England. When the other ships had gone, Edward Dodsworth, the company's merchant on the *Hope*, met the convicts ashore. He apparently did all he could to make their position easier. In the first place he sent them to Coree, a Hottentot, who had been to England, and was used by the Company as an agent at the Cape for securing cattle. The convicts, however, met with a hostile reception from the Hottentots and some of them were wounded. Dodsworth thereupon gave Cross four more muskets and again sent him to Coree, who then came down to the beach with cattle for the ship. Relations were still strained, however, and when the *Hope* left Table Bay on June 26, Cross obtained from Dodsworth some more ammunition and provisions and the ship's longboat.

The ten convicts, one of whom appears to have been a mere boy, were now left alone on the shores of Table Bay to contend with the hostile Hottentots. Cross, who is described as "Captain Crosse," appears to have had an unpleasant dis-

position and it was not long before the position was critical. In desperation the luckless convicts climbed into the long-boat and, leaving behind most of their arms and provisions, fled to Robben Island. There was a heavy sea running and they only landed on the island at the expense of smashing up their boat on the surf-beaten rocks. For eight months the convicts eked out a bare existence on desolate Robben Island. They had managed to bring ashore a quantity of dry biscuit and they had a great struggle to keep alive. (It must be remembered that the rabbits which now over-run Robben Island were placed there years later.) The convicts must have lived on penguins (the island was then called Penguin Island) and shell-fish and fish—probably a good deal of crawfish. At that time Robben Island seems to have been over-run with snakes, for one of the early chroniclers says that the convicts' lives were made miserable by many "venemous worms."

On March 1, 1616, a ship arrived in Table Bay, to the great excitement of the convicts. She was the *New Year's Gift*, from India, and homeward bound. Unfortunately, however, the marooned convicts were not seen from the ship as she sailed by to anchorage, so a raft was hastily constructed from the wreckage of the long-boat and from drift-wood. On this flimsy raft Cross and two others of the convicts attempted to reach the East Indiamen, in spite of the fact that night was falling. They got about half-way to the ship when, according to an early account, "two whales rose up by them, one of them so neere that they strooke him on the back with a woode spit; after which they sunke down and left them. Captain Crosse thus terrified with the whales, and benumbed with the water, returned to the Iland, and having refreshed himself, adventured the second time, giving charge to one of the Company to have an eye on him so long as he could see him. This fellow saith he saw him a great way from the Iland, and on the sudden lost sight of him, which is the last newes of him."

Cross was apparently alone on the raft when he was drowned. Two days later, Coree, the Hottentot, told the commander of the *New Year's Gift* that the ten convicts were on Robben Island. The ship's pinnace was sent across and for some reason only three of the convicts taken off. These three caused so much trouble that they spent most of the voyage in irons. The ship had scarcely arrived in England when they got loose and went ashore, stole a purse and were arrested. They were then ordered to be executed for their earlier crimes.

What happened to the men who were still left on Robben Island is not clear, but they are said to have been rescued by a Portuguese ship. One account also suggests, though probably wrongly, that Cross was not drowned but picked up by a passing ship. The story of this settlement is told at length in Terry's "Voyages to the East Indies," published in 1655, and briefly in "Purchas' Pilgrimages." Repeated references to the settlement are found in the "East India Records." There is an account of it in Ian Colvin's "Cape of Adventure" (1916), while the present account is substantially that of a special correspondent in the *Cape Times* in 1924.

CANADA'S COAL PRODUCTION

The latest monthly review published by the Department of Immigration and Colonisation of the Canadian Pacific Railway tells us that coal production in Canada last year showed a moderate increase over 1936 and was the largest since 1929. Imports recorded a greater gain and were the highest since 1930. Exports showed a moderate decrease. Canada's coal imports come mainly from the United States and the United Kingdom, while the chief markets for Canadian coal are found in the United States and Newfoundland. Canadian coal production is chiefly bituminous. While bituminous coal also bulks most largely in Canada's imports, there are large imports of anthracite as well.

Production of coal in Canada totalled 15,774,700 short tons last year. In 1936 the output was 15,229,100, while in 1929 it was 17,496,500 tons. Imports of coal into Canada rose from 13,735,000 tons in 1936 to 16,004,400 tons last year, while exports declined from 411,500 to 355,200 tons. In 1930 imports of coal into Canada were 18,412,000 tons and exports 624,500 tons.

Nova Scotia led the provinces of Canada last year in coal production with Alberta second. The Nova Scotia output amounted to 7,227,700 tons and that from Alberta mines to 5,551,400 tons. Production in British Columbia amounted to 1,594,900 tons; Saskatchewan 1,046,900 tons; New Brunswick 351,000 tons and Manitoba 2,400 tons. Of the total production for the Dominion bituminous coal accounted for 11,587,100 tons, sub-bituminous for 505,900 tons, and lignite for 3,681,700 tons. The Nova Scotia product is wholly bituminous as is that from British Columbia and New Brunswick. The Manitoba and Saskatchewan output is lignite; while Alberta produces bituminous, sub-bituminous and lignite.

Nearly ninety per cent. of Canada's imports of coal in 1937 came from the United States. More than four-fifths of the imports from the United States were bituminous. The greater part of the imports of British coal was anthracite. A small amount of lignite was imported, almost all from the United States but a little from Germany, which also shipped a considerable amount of anthracite and some bituminous coal. Total imports of coal from the United States were 14,338,100 tons, of which 2,003,300 tons were anthracite and 12,333,300 bituminous. Imports from the United Kingdom totalled 1,190,900 tons, of which 56,000 tons were bituminous and 1,134,800 tons anthracite. From Germany came 312,300 tons, 258,200 tons being anthracite and 54,000 tons bituminous. From Russia came 154,400 tons all anthracite. There were small imports of anthracite from Belgium and a little from Morocco, as well as small shipments of bituminous from Esthonia and Norway.

Canada is possessed of enormous coal reserves, but these are as yet only slightly developed. The reserves, which are estimated at 1,234,289,000,000 metric tons, are located chiefly in Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Ontario and Quebec, which have no developed coal reserves, are richly endowed with water powers as sources of industrial energy.

From Our Files

11 January, 1896

THE AMAZING TELEGRAM

THE German Emperor has anticipated the verdict of history upon his character and upon his reign. By the light of the week's events, we see him revealed as a man foredestined to failure, humiliation, and disaster. There are no longer any doubts about him. Even while all Englishmen tingle with resentment at the gratuitous insolence of the affront which he has levelled at them, their calmer second thought tells them that it is he, and the country whose misfortune it is to have him on its throne, who have reason to be disturbed about what has happened.

Since the First Napoleon, there has been no other crowned head in Europe which could have conceived such a message as that which was despatched by the Emperor to President Kruger last Friday week. The great Corsican insulted other people freely, but he had previously demonstrated his ability and entire willingness to back up offensive words with deeds. When he was at last broken and caged, Imperial impudence went altogether out of fashion. Not even the magnificent Nicholas I., proud and violent of temper as he was, ventured to employ public impertinence as a weapon in his dealings with the nations about him. It is only now that, without provocation, or any preliminary sign of disagreement, the sovereign of a great State deliberately and in cold blood offers to a friendly Power the most complete and ingeniously worded insult which can be imagined. The telegram to Pretoria implicitly expresses delight that English blood has been spilled and English lives taken; it states that "friendly Powers" would have joined in this work of killing Englishmen if they had been invited to do so; and it asserts the independence of a State over which England holds by treaty certain well-defined rights of suzerainty. Bonaparte himself could not have devised a more comprehensive affront to a people he meant to overrun and subjugate. But this astonishing action proceeds from a young man who has never won any battles abroad, and at home has done nothing more splendid than fill his gaols with poor devils of newspaper editors, and increase the number of Socialist enemies in his Parliament from 10 to 44. It was natural enough that all England should start with indignation at such a wanton outrage, and it was intelligible that this wrathful feeling should be intensified by the recollection that the offender was the son of our

Princess Royal and the grandson of our Queen. But at this distance of time from the original offence, it is possible to pass these considerations by, and to bestow undivided attention upon the larger question involved.

At the first blush, the Germans seemed to be all of one opinion—namely, that the Emperor had rendered himself the idol of all his people. It was excitedly pointed out, in this early outburst of enthusiasm, that even the Social Democratic press approved his fine anti-English posture. But the next day this was not quite so manifest. After two days more, the German papers had so modified their transports that the change could only be accounted for by the English correspondents in Berlin on the theory that an official hint had been sent round to stop the agitation. Nothing is risked by the prophecy that a few more days will suffice, with or without Ministerial intervention, to reduce the "reptile" press to entire calmness. The Prussians are people with loud voices and a vehement surface-temper, but beneath their noisy self-assertiveness they conceal much shrewd caution and good sense. They perceive already that, if the Emperor went on from provocative words to hostile actions, one brief campaign would serve to undo everything they have done for their own advantage, at home and abroad, since 1870. A little later they will recognise that a monarch who could with such flippant levity lead them into such danger is even less fit to rule than his sharpest critics had deemed him to be. The dilemma which the Emperor has created for himself is awkward enough. Either he must go ahead, and precipitate upon himself and his Empire a disaster which could hardly be less than fatal, or he must back down and bow his head before a storm of disgusted reproaches from every quarter of the German Empire. Whichever course he takes, there is nothing but ignominy for him.

The evils of the military system are incarnated in the spectacle which is here presented to us. "A Nation in Arms" served General von der Goltz as the subject for one of the best military books ever written. It might be taken afresh as the title for a study of the political and social state in its very lowest and most repellent aspects. The conditions of life in a vast armed camp have not only overwhelmed the judgment of the unfortunate young man at the head of it, but they have reduced the whole German social system to an almost incredible level of servility where it has not been broken up by actual revolt. During the past year the processes of this national demoralization have been peculiarly manifest. Gradually the Emperor has mounted into the clouds towards absolutism, and his subjects have shrunk earthward in abased silence. The Reichstag has become a futile shadow; Ministers have ceased to suggest the idea that they have opinions of their own; the new head of the Home Office has made a speech congratulating the nation that "God has placed at the head of the Fatherland a Sovereign so providentially endowed that his intuition of what is right can never be for a moment or in a single instance at

fault"—and Germany, the Germany of the *gymnasias* and Universities, has listened without comment! The army has turned the head of the Emperor, and crushed the manhood of the civic Empire. Whether the change comes through the shock of foreign war, or the crash of domestic convulsions, it is evident that a change of some sort there must be, and that it must involve a heavy penalty for the people who invented the monstrous anachronism of "a Nation in Arms."

As to her own position in this crisis, England can afford to be entirely confident. She knows her duties and also her rights in the Transvaal. She has been alert and vigorous in fulfilling the former, notwithstanding the unpleasant circumstances surrounding the task; she has no intention of abandoning one jot or tittle of the latter. President Kruger is too wise a politician not to understand this perfectly, and not to comprehend also that Germany can be of no practical assistance to him in any quarrel with "manifest destiny." The loose talk of the Continental gossips about England's isolation has no substance. We are accustomed to isolation, and we thrive on it. But the real terrors of isolation are for Germans to think about. During the twenty-five years of their Empire's existence it could never have stood for a day without alliances. It was propped up at the beginning by the close personal ties subsisting between the Czar Alexander II. and his uncle, the German Kaiser. Later it was buttressed by the Triple Alliance. To-day, with these aids still nominally at its service, it leans even more directly upon the supposed friendship of Russia, which it assumes carries with it at least the neutrality of France. But these alliances and friendships are not disinterested. They rest, without exception, upon the premiss that Germany can requite them in kind. The moment that this became doubtful where would Germany have an ally, where a friend? Who is so in love with the idea of Berlin playing the autocrat in Europe? Is it France, with its huge army composed entirely of young men born in the years immediately following the invasion of 1870, and its deep-seated longing for the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine? A glance at the newspapers of Paris answers the question. In the presence of a mere possibility of war with Germany, on terms promising success, the memories of the Russian dalliance have faded out of the French mind like a dream.

That Germany has some more or less definite understanding or arrangement with Russia in a sense hostile to us is quite possible. Portugal, it is true, seems to have determined to maintain a strict neutrality with regard to England and Germany alike, but there is nothing to show, thus far, that Austria and Italy have dis-associated themselves from the enterprises of their partner in the Triple Alliance, although their active participation is so improbable as to be scarcely worth considering. But whatever combination the German Emperor thinks he has in hand to-day, we may face it with a steady nerve. As for himself, whether he advances or retreats, the angriest Englishman could wish him nothing worse than the outlook before him.

16 June, 1906

"A FLORENTINE TRAGEDY" AND "SALOME"

LAST Sunday, at the King's Hall, the Literary Theatre club performed these two plays of Mr. Oscar Wilde. Neither of them is a cheerful play. So neither could have a chance of success in England. For that minority which is capable of taking the drama seriously as an art, and does not object to receiving tragic emotion now and then, these two plays have an extrinsic power of depression. They indicate anew to us how much was lost to dramatic art in the downfall and death of the great artist who composed them.

"A Florentine Tragedy" (produced for the first time) is akin to "Salomé" as being an essay in the art of suspense. In "Salomé" the end is foreknown; and the main horror comes of the deliberate slowness with which the action is conducted to that end. Often the dramatic movement is deliberately arrested to make way for merely decorative passages, such as Salomé's metaphors about the eyes, the hair, the lips of Iokanaan, or Herod's descriptions of the jewels and the peacocks and the various other things that Salomé might take instead of the one thing that she demands. Merely decorative in themselves, these passages are relatively dramatic in that they give us time to realise more intensely the horror of what is in store. In "A Florentine Tragedy" we know there must be at least one death before the curtain falls; and the elaborate decorations interposed do not make us forget it: they do but give us time to become uncomfortable. Nor are they, as in "Salomé", a mere artistic device of the author. They come from the nature of the chief character devised. Simone, the Florentine merchant, is a man of grim humour; and so, when he surprises his wife in the company of a young nobleman, he does not instantly draw his sword. He is furious; but his fury he will be able to express later. Meanwhile he can have some fun. He can fool the couple to the top of their bent, then suddenly drop a hint that will make them start, then again soothe them into security till he choose to frighten them again. His vengeance will be all the sweeter, all the more terrible, for such dalliance. He plays on his young wife's contempt for him, cringing to the stranger, descending unctuously on this or that ware that he would sell. His desire is not merely to humiliate her. If she does not love the stranger yet, she shall by force of contrast be made to love him. His death shall be a dagger through her own heart. At length, after he has taken his fill of pretence, he challenges the lover to fight. The lover, worsted, begs for mercy, and is allowed to go on begging before Simone, with more than necessary violence, despatches him. The wife shrinks against the wall. She sees in her husband's eyes that she, too, is doomed. And now comes the ending for sake of which, I take it, the play was written—the germ of psychological paradox from which the story developed itself backwards. The wife falls to her knees, and, with real love in her voice, cries "Why did you not tell me you were so strong?" The husband pauses, stares at her,

lets drop his dagger, saying "Why did you not tell me you were so beautiful?" There is, of course, no great paradox in the first of these two speeches. (One remembers, for instance, Becky Sharp's sudden admiration for Rawdon Crawley after the ejection of Lord Steyne.) But the second speech is certainly a daring invention. Is the paradox a sound one? I think so. It is not unnatural that the merchant, having won his bride with money, should not have appreciated her at her full human value until he had won her by more primitive, more human means. Her contempt for him, moreover, would have prejudiced him against her. The light of admiration for him in her eyes, besides making her actually more beautiful, would have quickened his perception of her beauty. And then there was the fact that she had inspired a passion in the nobleman. This, too, would have quickened the merchant's perception. My sole objection to the paradox is concerned with the placing of it. No play—no work of art whatsoever—ought to finish on a top note. We ought never to be left gasping, at the fall of the curtain. The paradox that I have examined ought to have been led up to, so that its meaning would have been plain when the curtain fell. It ought to have been a summing-up, not a challenge. Mr. Wilde's sure artistic sense here failed him, for once.

Obviously, the part of Simone is a fine part for an actor. I should like to have seen it played by Sir Henry Irving. I know of no one else who could have given fully the sardonic essence of it. Mr. George Ingleton, however, who played it the other night, is a very capable actor; and his performance seemed really distinguished in the glare of incapacity shed by the young lady and gentleman who played the two other parts.

When "Salomé" was produced last year at the Bijou Theatre, I reflected that only the finest acting and the most tactful stage-management could reconcile us to the physical horror of the play. Reading the play, one has no more than the right tragic thrill. Seeing the play—seeing Salomé kiss in triumph the severed head of the prophet—one is thrilled with mere physical disgust, unless the scene be arranged with great compunction, and unless the acting of Salomé shall have been on a lofty tragic plane. Neither of these requisites was supplied at the Bijou Theatre. At the King's Hall, Miss Darragh supplied one of them. She is not the ideal Salomé; for she looks rather modern, rather occidental. But, besides having a beautiful voice, and speaking the words with a keen sense for their cadence, she is a genuine tragedian, and thus was able to live in the part, and, living there, to purge somewhat our physical disgust through spiritual terror. She was, as nearly as need be, the veritable daughter of Herodias. Miss Florence Farr was not, alas, the veritable mother of Salomé. She was very much too pleasant. She seemed to be trying to make Herodias "sympathetic", and was quite out of the key of the tragedy. Mr. Robert Farquharson re-appeared as Herod; and I was more than ever struck by the fineness of his performance. His delivery of the three long decorative speeches is a marvel in the art of elocution. Other English actors may know how valuable an effect can be got

from sometimes talking quickly; but I have never found them taking advantage of their knowledge. Perhaps they have not the necessary skill. Mr. Farquharson can, without slurring a syllable, speak English as rapidly as Mme. Sarah Bernhardt can speak French; and the effect in his case is even greater than in hers, because none of his compatriots has attempted to compete with him. Apart from its technique, his performance is memorable for the rare imaginative power with which he realises the grotesque and terrible figure of Herod.

As the scenery and the dresses were designed by Mr. Charles Ricketts, it need not be said they were beautiful. They were also, however, dramatically appropriate—just enough conventionalised to be in harmony with the peculiar character of the play. The stage-management was faulty only in the final scene; and that, alas, is the scene where perfection is most needed. Not even the quality of Miss Darragh's acting could wholly purge our physical disgust. It is obvious that Salomé ought to be in the far background, and in deepest shadow, while she holds in her hands the head of the prophet. This would not merely militate against physical disgust. It would aid illusion. When we distinctly see the head, we are conscious of its unreality, however realistically it be made. And our consciousness of its unreality does not make it one whit the less unpleasant. MAX BEERBOHM.

THE INNER MAN ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

GLOBE ARTICHOKE

It is quite true that the iron in the globe artichoke is as unfavourable to the appreciation of fine wine as the acid there is in asparagus. There are two ways of dealing with this problem: the first is to serve with artichokes either a very ordinary wine, the *vin ordinaire en carafe* on all French bourgeois tables, which people drink in France with water added to it, or else a young Champagne of the average modern type, rather sweet and gassy. The second is to cover up the taste of the artichoke with minced mushrooms or browned-in-the-oven grated cheese.

No lurid wine, whether capable of standing up to artichokes or not, is to be recommended; it would choke the artichoke, of course, but spoil the palate for the next course and wine, since nobody ends a meal on an artichoke.

CAPERS

Capers are the flower-buds of the *Capparis spinosa*, a bush which is not unlike the ordinary wild bramble of our hedges. It grows very well in the south of France, Spain and Italy, but there is no reason why it should not be grown in England, in sheltered places on a south wall, or upon a heap of stones and rubbish in a warm corner of the garden. The vinegar in which capers are pickled, and their own acid but pleasant taste, would naturally rule out a dish of pickled capers whenever fine wine was to be served, but a few capers in a white sauce or in melted butter do not hurt the flavour of a light white wine, nor of any white wine.

Letters to the Editor

THE REPLANNING OF CENTRAL AREAS

Sir,—I read with much interest in your issue of May 28 an important letter on the above subject signed by Colonel H. L. Nathan, M.P.

Your correspondent calls attention to the possibility of decentralising some part of the growth of large cities into "satellite" towns. The very cogent evidence recently given before the Barlow Commission by the Town Planning Institute and the Garden Cities Association certainly reinforces this suggestion.

In some instances central areas of cities have been cleared of slums and part of the sites subsequently re-developed for business purposes. This has resulted in an increase in the number of persons working in or near the centre, a keener demand for housing accommodation in the adjoining properties, and the imposition of an added strain on transport services in and to the centre of the city, which may in due course necessitate expensive road-widening schemes.

Similar questions arise in settling the zoning and density provisions of a planning scheme for the built-up area of a large city, and in some cases it may be desirable to avoid additional or extended zones for business and industry in the built-up area. Moreover, by appropriate use of the density provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, a general increase of the coverage and bulk of existing business and industrial buildings (as and when the owners wish to re-develop the properties) can be checked without involving the payment of compensation.

If a city is able and willing to embark on a scheme for a satellite town—detached from the city proper and laid out for development on sound planning principles—then much better conditions can be provided for the decentralised industries and the workpeople, while congestion can be relieved at the centre of the city.

A policy of decentralisation undoubtedly promises much relief to many a large city faced with almost insoluble planning problems. It is to be hoped that Colonel Nathan will continue to press vigorously for the adoption of such a policy.

JOHN G. MARTIN,
(Secretary of the National Housing
and Town Planning Council).

41, Russell-square, W.C.1.

A PLEA FOR PLAIN ENGLISH

Sir,—The Finance Bill of this year contains provisions to counteract the prevalent legal avoidance of taxation in various forms. While this is an object with which the great majority of taxpayers will be in sympathy, I would suggest that there is one aspect of the matter which needs immediate attention.

I refer to the deplorably complicated language in which these various sections have been drafted. Some clauses are so obscure that many decisions in the Courts will be necessary before their meaning

can be determined. It is not right that individual taxpayers should be put to the trouble and expense of obtaining these decisions, when proceedings could have been avoided by clarity in the first place.

This Society has always urged the view that the expenses incurred in elucidating the meaning of doubtful provisions in a Finance Act should be borne by the Exchequer and not by the individual taxpayer, and I very strongly suggest that the difficult and quite unnecessarily ambiguous provisions of the present Bill go far to reinforce this argument.

Parliament has always been solicitous to protect the subject from undue hardship, and I hope that

DECIES

(Director, Income-Tax Payers' Society).

Abbey House,

2, Victoria-street, London, S.W.1.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY APPEAL

Sir,—The response to the Oxford University Appeal by Oxford graduates has been very disappointing, only about one-tenth of the total number having subscribed to date, which provides a disappointing answer to the question of what Oxford men have done to help their own University.

I know, however, that some people are under a misapprehension as to what the Appeal is for, and may feel that Lord Nuffield's amazing generosity should have rendered it unnecessary. But Lord Nuffield's gifts to Oxford, apart from the £100,000 for this particular Appeal, are all for specific purposes of an entirely new nature, and have been made to provide and endow a Medical Research Institute and a College for Social Studies. They, therefore, do not help the already existing institutions at Oxford, for which this present Appeal is made, and a summary of these needs is as follows:—

1. To endow a General Research Fund	£100,000
2. To extend the Ashmolean Museum	15,000
3. To rebuild the Physiology Laboratory	60,000
4. To rebuild the Botany Laboratory	40,000
5. For maintenance of the Physical Chemistry Laboratory to be built by Lord Nuffield	35,000
	<hr/> £250,000

The Appeal closes on 31st July, so this is the last chance I shall have of appealing to your generosity.

Cheques should be made payable to me here, or to the Hon. Treasurer, Oxford University Appeal, and sent to the Vice-Chancellor, Old Clarendon Building, Oxford. Particulars and forms of Deeds of Covenant, whereby a donation can be spread over a period of seven years, will be forwarded on application to the Secretary.

A. C. L. PATON (London Secretary),

Oxford University Appeal Committee.

126, Grand Buildings,
Trafalgar-square, W.C.2.

Your Investments

RECOVERY OR REACTION?

CONFIDENCE hangs on so slender a thread nowadays that to be bullish of markets is rash in the extreme. On the other hand, there is no point in the investor taking a view which may prove to be unduly pessimistic, for he has to find employment for his funds and few investors are in a position to "sell a bear," a highly speculative operation not to be recommended save for the expert. The whole fabric of London's recovery was built up on the sharp and somewhat untrustworthy change of sentiment in New York where prospects of trade and business recovery were being rapidly discounted. But the Anglo-German debt agreement added something more of substance to the movement for it is the first evidence for many years of a voluntary European attempt to meet financial difficulties squarely. Markets are in that state when confidence or recovery hang in the balance. Investors who enter the market at present levels may reap a quick reward in higher prices or they may see some temporary depreciation. But it is difficult to see how they can go wrong in a purchase of sound British industrials at levels giving them anything up to 7 per cent.

GERMAN BONDS STATUS

The market will take some time to decide the proper valuation for German and Austrian bonds on the basis of the new agreement. First reactions were to put Austrian issues up again far above the German Loans themselves. Thus the Austrian 4½ per cent. rose to 70 and the 7 per cent. to 55 as against the quotations of 60 for the German Dawes 7 per cent. bonds and 47 for the Young 5½ per cent. Yields on these two latter issues are well over 8 per cent. and 9 per cent. respectively and there are the sinking fund payments to be taken into account. These are for the balance of the interest now "cut" to 5 per cent. on the 7 per cent. bonds and 4½ per cent. on the 5½ per cent. issue and they will help to maintain the market price of the bonds. It would seem that the market has not yet accustomed itself to the new status of the loans. How their past history will affect their future is difficult to imagine and now that, in practice, Germany has assumed liability for both Austrian and German payments there should not be such a wide gap between the market quotations. Further, the various municipal loans should prove a profitable purchase at around their present level of 30.

RICHARD THOMAS PLANS

At last the plans for the financing of the huge Ebbw Vale steel project of Richard Thomas & Co. are announced and once again it is a question of the banks coming to the rescue. Hence share-

holders must expect to make sacrifices, and this they are duly asked to do to make way for a prior security to be issued to the banks to put up a further £6,000,000. The most important features of the plan are the terms upon which the banks are granting assistance. First, control of the company passes into the hands of a committee with the Governor of the Bank of England as Chairman. Further, new directors are appointed who represent on the Board firms which might normally be regarded as rivals of Richard Thomas & Co. Full co-operation in the steel industry and semi-official direction are thus part and parcel of the scheme. This seems to the writer to be one of the fastest and largest nails ever driven into the coffin of private finance and enterprise. Concentrate the control of industry in the hands of the banks, and its future "Socialisation" is made simple.

SHAREHOLDERS' POSITION

Perhaps for the moment it is more pertinent to consider the position of existing stockholders and shareholders. The 4 per cent. debentures have their rate of interest raised to 4½ per cent. and as their security remains reasonable they appear a sound investment at 75 yielding 6 per cent. As they have always been a poor market, possibly holders will find little cause for dissatisfaction. The 6½ per cent. tax-free shareholders are in a very different position. Before the extravagant new Ebbw Vale plan came into being these shares were a prosperous security priced at 30s. which emerged from a praiseworthy straightening out of tangled finances. Now the preference dividend is to be non-cumulative until 1943 and, if paid, it will be less tax. The shares participate with the ordinary up to 10 per cent. in all and have, in fact, been reduced to an equity status. The ordinary receive no final dividend and prospects of future payments are hazy in the extreme. This was to be expected as the equity should suffer any capital losses. The plan can hardly be said to assure holders of industrial preference stocks who are nowadays always called upon to make sacrifices whenever a company has difficulties to meet. These preference shares have now become a purely speculative holding. Perhaps the market will note that the Chairman of Baldwins is joining the Board of R. Thomas and that the 4s. units of the soundly financed Baldwins, Ltd., are down to 6s. yielding 6 2-3rds per cent.

IMPERIAL BANK OF IRAN

Since Anglo-Iranian relations settled down again companies operating in Iran have prospered and among them is the Imperial Bank of Iran. The bank no longer operates in its original form, but with British interests in Iran expanding, especially in the oilfields, the bank holds a powerful position. Loans and advances at March 20 totalled £2,720,367 and deposits £3,740,532 against which the cash position was strong at £866,211 with investments of over £3,000,000. The dividend was again 5½ per cent. with 1 per cent. bonus tax-free, giving the shares at £14 17s. 6d. a yield of 4½ per cent. tax-free.

THE NATIONAL

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